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Efforts continue to gut the Central Intelligence Agency

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The national demoralization which followed the Vietnam and Nixon debacles contributed much to weaken America. One of the worst features of those years was the gutting of the Central Intelligence Agency. Except to those who have blinded themselves by naivete or culpable ignorance, it is obvious that we are at war with the communist empire.

This war is at times bloody, usually it takes subtler — although no less competitive forms. When Cuban troops are used against the Angolan or Somalian people, America is the ultimate target. When Cuban-supported Sandinistas impose a terror regime in Nicaragua, America is the ultimate target. When Cuban-trained Salvadoran guerrillas attempt to destroy the economy of their country or terrorize the peasants, the ultimate target is also America.

So long as any nation on earth governs itself democratically or organizes its economy on a free enterprise basis, the Marxist bureaucrats can not be at peace. The example of freedom is too dangerous for them, since it makes the people they oppress aware that freedom can be a reality. Whether we like it or not, we are at war. Trying to avoid this issue will only aggravate matters.

STAT This was the import of Khrushchev's remark at the U.N. a few years ago when he pounded the podium with his shoe while screaming at us: "We will bury you!" Some have conveniently forgotten this event or at least refuse to take the communists at their word. Responsible government officials used to — and we hope they do still — take the communists seriously. To help America wage this battle, the federal government organized the CIA in 1947. While in many cases world affairs are conducted according to the rules of logic and propriety established by international law, at times this is not the case. Anything else is wishful think-

ing. With the realism and ingenuity required by the situation, the CIA was given — with the proper restraints — the authority to engage in covert operations. This is a nasty business, but a necessary one. If we were at peace with all nations, there would be no need for covert operations. In fact, we are not totally at peace. In the dream world of liberal fairy tales, the CIA is an abomination. In the real world, where we are threatened by ruthless enemies, it is an absolute necessity.

Following a frontal assault on the CIA by House and Senate committees headed by Otis Pike, D-N.Y., and Frank Church, D-Idaho, respectively, in the 1970s, the agency became increasingly ineffective, beset by problems of morale caused by the systematic opposition to its activities by leftists in the media and the Congress. It is only recently that the CIA has begun a slow process of recovery. It will take years for the CIA to regain its stature.

Still, the prospect of an efficient intelligence apparatus capable of undertaking covert activities with precision and professionalism terrifies the left. After all, we might even put the U.S.S.R. at the defensive again. The obvious intent of the present administration to rebuild the CIA has infuriated the left to a frenzy unseen since the days of Watergate. The ethics of undermining an agency dedicated to ensure the survival of our nation is highly questionable.

On May 27, the Dirksen Senate Office Building served as the site for a conference on the CIA sponsored by the Campaign for Political Rights, an organization that describes itself as dedicated "to end U.S. intelligence agency 'abuse' at home and abroad." The meeting focused on alleged CIA activities against Nicaragua. It took as point of departure unsubstantiated stories which appeared in The Washington Post and,

The New York Times. According to these stories, the CIA was poised to spend millions in destabilizing the Sandinista regime. The CIA is a sitting duck when attacked by hostile newspapers since, as a matter of principle, it can not admit or deny the existence of any covert operations.

The meeting featured individuals like Frank Church and Robert White, the Carter ambassador to El Salvador. Included also were Xavier Gorostiaga, a Jesuit; Patricia Hynds, a Maryknoll "missionary," and Alvaro Jerez, a member of the Nicaraguan Council of State.

Immediately, the propaganda machine of the left in support of anti-American Marxists in Nicaragua went into operation. The very night of the conference, U.S. tax-supported PBS provided Gorostiaga a forum from which to agitate against American interests in the friendliest of all interviews.

The participation of Catholic institutions in the conference was not immediately apparent to naive observers. Among the groups supporting the efforts none had specific "Catholic" names. Groups such as the Washington Office on Latin America or the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy do not appear to have church connections. Under the skins of these and other groups operate a complex network of Catholic institutions which are lending their support — in name at least — to the very destruction of our freedoms. Among them, and this is only

a sampler, we have been able to document groups such as Woodstock Theological Center, the U.S. Catholic Mission Council, the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, the Sisters of Mercy (headed by the ubiquitous Teresa Kane), the Maryknollers, the United States Catholic Conference, the Capuchins, the National Federation of Priests' Councils, the National Office of Jesuit Social Ministries, Network (an organization of leftist nuns), the Sisters of Loretto, the Sisters of Notre Dame, etc. The names available are just too many to include them all.

This situation poses considerable danger for the church and for America. The active involvement of church personnel in activities seemingly designed to impair our ability to fight the communist enemy has ominous implications. Inactivity on the part of church authorities causes us to ask even more serious questions. For the sake of America and the future of the Catholic church as a credible institution it is imperative that leftist political activism on the part of clergy and religious cease. The alternative is that the church will cease to be an institution worthy of respect and acceptance.